

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended): Apparatus for processing a substrate having a thickness of 250 microns or less, said apparatus including a chamber, plasma creation element or elements for creating a plasma in a zone of the chamber, and an electrostatic chuck for retaining a substrate at a substrate location in or adjacent to the zone such that an upper surface of the substrate faces away from the chuck, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the apparatus further includes a dark space shield disposed on the zone side of the chuck circumjacent or overlying the periphery of a peripheral portion of the upper surface the substrate at the location for preventing the presence of plasma between the shield and the periphery portion of the upper surface of a the substrate in at the location whilst allowing processing of the substrate.

2. (currently amended): Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the shield is generally annular and circumjacent the chuck.

3. (previously presented): Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the shield is electrically conducting.

4. (original): Apparatus as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the shield is grounded.

5. (previously presented): Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the chuck is also a plasma creating element.

6. (previously presented): Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the chuck is powered.

7. (currently amended): A method of processing a substrate having a thickness of 250 microns or less, said method comprising including electrostatically clamping the substrate to a chuck, creating a plasma adjacent the outwardly facing face of the clamped substrate, and locating a dark space shield overlying between the plasma and the periphery of the outwardly facing face of the clamped substrate to prevent the presence of plasma between the shield and the periphery whilst allowing processing of the substrate.

8. (currently amended): A method as claimed in Claim [[2]] 7 wherein the substrate thickness is less than or equal to 100 microns.